

## NOTES

**External Parasites of the Electric Eel, *Electrophorus electricus* (Linnaeus).** Two external parasites have been found so far on the electric eel, *Electrophorus electricus*. On one eel, measuring about five feet in length, numerous "anchor" parasites (copepods) were found embedded in the thick skin along the dorsal surface of the body. The copepods were identified as *Lernaecocera cyprinacea* L. and have been previously reported by many investigators from several species of cyprinid fishes. On September 30, 1937, five of the smaller eels (ranging in size from 18" to 2'6") were found to be heavily infected with leeches. More than 2,375 parasites were removed from one eel measuring 24½ inches in length. These leeches are the common *Placobdella parasitica* (Say) which are usually found on the soft parts of turtles, but which also have been reported on other fishes. When bearing eggs or young, the leeches often leave the host for a time and lead a free life underneath stones, and feed on worms and larvae.

The interesting thing about these infections is that the parasites were able to withstand the electric discharges of the eels. These discharges, according to Coates, Cox and Granath (1937)<sup>1</sup> may reach a voltage of 300 in eels exceeding 50 cm. in length. One 11½" eel gave off about 200 volts (Coates and Cox, 1936)<sup>2</sup>.

It is definitely known that the eels were discharging at the time the parasites were present.—ROSS F. NIGRELLI, New York Aquarium.

<sup>1</sup> C. W. Coates, R. T. Cox, and L. P. Granath (1937). *Zoologica* 22: 1-32.

<sup>2</sup> C. W. Coates and R. T. Cox (1936). *Zoologica* 21: 125-128.